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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/510,521	09/27/2004	Ana Lacoste	15675P550	8875

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02/28/2007

EXAMINER

A, MINH D

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2821

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	02/28/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/510,521

Applicant(s)

LACOSTE ET AL.

Examiner

Minh D. A

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 September 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 12/28/04.

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. This is a response to the Applicants' filing on 9/27/04. In virtue of this filing, claims 1-19 are currently presented in the instant application.

Priority

2. Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Inventorship

3. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Information Disclosure Statement

4. The information disclosure statement (IDS) submitted on 12/28/04 is in compliance with the provisions of 37 CFR 1.97. Accordingly, the information disclosure statement is being considered by the examiner.

Drawings Accepted

5. The drawings submitted on 9/27/04 are accepted.

Claim Objections/ Improper Dependent claim

6. Claims 4-19 are objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Applicant is required to cancel the claim(s), or amend the claim(s) to place the claim(s) in proper dependent form, or rewrite the claim(s) in independent form. Therefore, the claims 4-19 are not treated on the merits.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

7. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

8. Claims 1-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Regarding claim 1, lines 2-3, the word "means" is preceded by the word(s) "the" in an attempt to use a "means" clause to recite a claim element as a means for performing a specified function. However, since no function is specified by the word(s) preceding "means," it is impossible to determine the equivalents of the element, as required by 35 U.S.C. 112, sixth paragraph. See *Ex parte Klumb*, 159 USPQ 694 (Bd. App. 1967).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

9. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

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A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

10. Claims 1, 8 and 10-19 are rejected the best understood under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hollars (U.S. Patent No. 6,365,301).

Regarding claims 1 and 10-19, Hollars discloses in figures 1a-2, 3a, 7-11, a sputtering apparatus and process for high rate coatings comprising a plasma chamber (2) for creating a magnetic field and a series of permanent magnets (3a-3b) capable of creating a magnetic field presenting an alternating multi-pole magnetic structure to a plasma, characterized in that the magnets are capable of confining the plasma in a large volume, the magnets (3a-3b) being discontinuously distributed around the volume and in that the magnets are arranged inside the chamber (2), at a distance from the walls of the chamber held in place by support rods, the support rods extending along the axis of magnetization of the magnets and being arranged so that they are centred on the poles of the permanent magnets (3a-3b). Col.10, lines 25-67 to col.19, lines 1-50.

Regarding claim 8, Hollars discloses in figures 1a-2, 3a, 7-11, the support rods are tubes, the permanent magnets being located inside the tubes in the end extending into the chamber, each magnet comprising a plate or a disk made of a material with a high magnetic permeability on its face furthest back from the inside of the chamber. Col.10, lines 25-67 to col.15, lines 1-67.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

11. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

12. Claims 2-7 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over by Hollars (U.S. Patent No. 6,365,301).

Regarding claims 2-7 and 9, Hollars essentially discloses the claimed invention but does not explicitly disclose that, a support roads extend perpendicular to the walls of the chamber or the series of permanent is in a discontinuous checkerboard type structure or in a discontinuous structure with interrupted line or the permanent magnets are cylindrical or the material is soft iron.

It would have been an obvious matter of design choice to employ Hollars in any desired interest of different magnets in order to maximize the usage of his invention, since applicant does not disclose that, all of these limitations can solve any stated problem and for any particular purpose. Therefore, it appears that the invention would not provide any improvement but merely apply the invention in different.

Citation of relevant prior art

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

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Prior art Shintani et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,076,483) discloses a plasma processing apparatus using a partition panel.

Prior art Keller et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,051,151) discloses an apparatus and method of producing a negative ion plasma.

Prior art Lai (U.S. Patent No. 6,683,425) discloses a null field magnetron apparatus with essentially flat target.

Prior art Tzatzov et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,436,252) discloses method and apparatus for magnetron sputtering.

Inquiry

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Minh Dieu A whose telephone number is (571) 272-1817. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (5:30 AM-2:45 PM).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Owens Douglas W can be reached on (571) 272-1662. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you

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have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Examiner

Minh A

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1/7/07

Shih-Chao Chen
SHIH-CHAO CHEN
PRIMARY EXAMINER